



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Mayville's Norma Cummings Named 2012 'Woman of Distinction' by Senator Catharine Young

CATHARINE YOUNG May 18, 2012

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ALBANY – In times of emergency, you want someone like Norma Cummings on your side. Whether it's her family, friends or a stranger in need, she commits her time to helping others with kindness and compassion.

In honor of her years of dedication, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) named Mrs. Cummings as the 2012 Woman of Distinction for the 57th New York Senate District.

“I was very surprised when I learned I had been named this year’s Woman of Distinction. I do what I do to help – and I do the best I can for a lot of people. When I stop and look at 25 years in the fire service, the years at the Office of Emergency Medical Services for Chautauqua County, and all the things we have done to help people, I hope that our impact is something that lasts. I am grateful for all Senator Young does for our county, and I am happy to be here,” Mrs. Cummings said.

At a ceremony Tuesday evening in Albany, Senator Young recognized Mrs. Cummings for her achievements and service to Chautauqua County’s Office of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and other area organizations.

“Norma Cummings is hard-working and thoughtful, and her concern for others improves the quality of our communities, which she enthusiastically supports through her many endeavors. Norma has an incredible understanding of a community’s needs during times of disaster, and I am inspired by her drive to ensure everyone receives the proper care. Her compassion and determination has earned her this recognition and I can’t think of anyone more deserving,” said Senator Young.

Julius Leone, Fire Coordinator for Chautauqua County EMS, added, “Norma is a special person. She is always willing to help someone else in their time of need. She does everything quietly with compassion and determination. She is willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. She works so hard for others, and there’s no more deserving person than Norma. This is a wonderful thing for her, and we are so excited for her.”

Mrs. Cummings' husband, Scott, and her son, David, joined her in Albany for the Women of Distinction celebration. During her visit, Mrs. Cummings appeared on Senator Young's weekly television segment and spent time touring the capital.

Mrs. Cummings currently serves as the program planning coordinator for Chautauqua County's Office of EMS. She has actively participated on the Emergency Medical Service Council, Future of the Fire Service Committee, Mayville Rescue Squad, Western District of the Emergency Managers Association, American Red Cross, and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES).

In addition, Mrs. Cummings also helps the Boys Scouts, her Church, the Food Bank and Centaur Stride Therapeutic Riding Stables, an organization that promotes therapeutic horse riding for people with special needs. Having a special needs child of her own, Norma has volunteered many hours to special needs children as a Physical Therapy Assistant.

As an EMT instructor for SUNY Fredonia and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) trainer, Norma has enhanced the pre-hospital medical attention of First Responders both at the scene and in the ambulance through the many EMTs she has trained in Chautauqua County. She established a CPR training center and was instrumental in implementing a program placing AEDs in offices throughout the County.

In 1994, Norma received the Distinguished Woman of Westfield award through the YWCA for volunteer work with area hospitals, the Community and

Fire Departments. In 1999, was awarded the EMS Provider of the Year by the Chautauqua County American Legion.

After the tragedy on September 11, 2001, Norma was one of several volunteer EMTs from Chautauqua County to go to Ground Zero to assist with the relief efforts in New York City. Norma's concern for human needs during a disaster is also evident in her job with Emergency Services. During the flooding in Silver Creek in 2009, Norma was the driving force that pulled all resources together in a well-organized power house of action.

Mr. Leone and Patricia Cook, Administrative Assistant for Chautauqua County EMS, noted Mrs. Cummings' work after a flood in Silver Creek in 2009.

"She was always reaching out to identify people that needed help. She would find people that may have otherwise 'fallen through the cracks' or didn't want to come forward for help, and she would make sure they received assistance. She does that every day," Mr. Leone said.

Ms. Cook added, "She doesn't ever want anyone left behind. I was only here for three months when the flood happened, and I was impressed with the fact she was so organized, kept everyone else organized and made sure no one was left behind in their needs. She does so many things, and I am proud to be her friend and to work with her."

Created in 1998, the Senate's "Women of Distinction" recognition

seeks to honor New York women who exemplify personal excellence or whose professional achievements or acts of courage, selflessness, integrity or perseverance serve as an example to all New Yorkers.